

NORTH DAKOTA CROP, LIVESTOCK & WEATHER REPORT



North Dakota
Agricultural
Statistics Service

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For Month Ending: January 2, 2005
ND-CW0105

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NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE,
FARM SERVICE AGENCY,
ND AG WEATHER NETWORK (NDAWN) and
UND AEROSPACE REGIONAL WEATHER
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General: Above normal temperatures and below normal snowfall dominated most of December, while the most significant snowfall so far this winter was received the first weekend in January, according to North Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service. The mild weather combined with little snow cover has allowed producers to continue grazing livestock herds on pastures and corn stalks. As a result, ranchers were able to retain sufficient hay supplies for the winter.

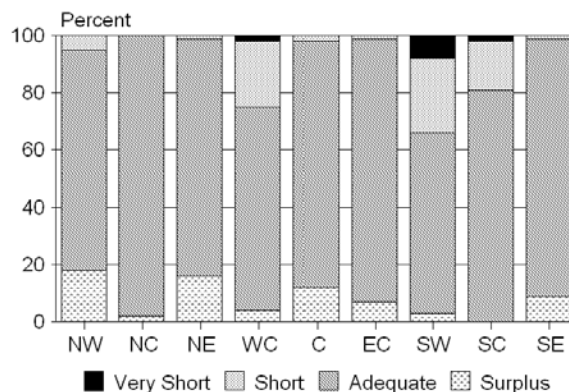
On average, statewide, there were 6.2 inches of snow cover on January 2, compared to 7.4 inches last year. The northeast district reported the most snow cover with an average of 11.8 inches followed by 11.0 inches in the northwest district. The south central and southeast districts reported the least snow cover with 2.3 and 1.4 inches, respectively.

County and secondary roads were rated 78 percent open, 19 difficult and 3 closed to travel. Road conditions were 48 percent dry, 27 icy, 22 drifted and 3 muddy.

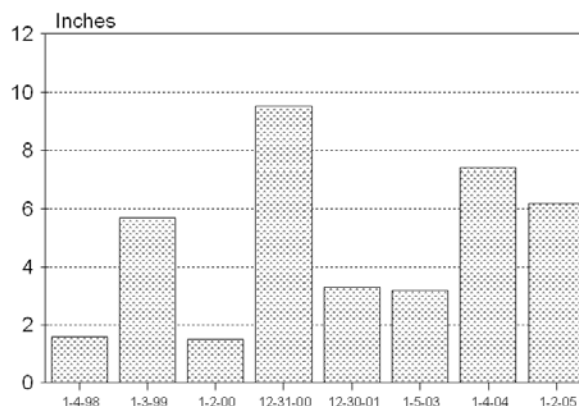
Crops: Producers were able to harvest corn during December; however, some reporters in the eastern part of the state indicated that there were still corn remaining in the fields. As of January 2, snow cover protection for alfalfa was rated 30 percent poor, 53 adequate and 17 excellent. Reports of alfalfa damage were received from the northwest district due to below zero temperatures and no snow cover during mid-December. More snow was reported as needed in some areas to protect winter wheat seeding, too.

Livestock: Mild weather conditions during December provided good conditions for cattle to graze on corn stalks. Cattle conditions were rated 1 percent poor, 11 fair, 76 good and 12 excellent. Sheep conditions were rated 1 percent very poor, 3 poor, 13 fair, 71 good and 12 excellent. Hay and forage supplies were rated 2 percent very short, 12 short, 79 adequate and 7 surplus.

Hay & Forage Supplies by District
North Dakota, January 2, 2005



Average Snow Depth by Date
North Dakota



~ Compiled and Published by ~

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Weather: December 2004 will go down as a warm month. Average monthly temperatures for many locations across the state were warmer than normal. Average monthly temperatures ranged from 3.9 degrees above normal in Grand Forks to 8 degrees above normal in Williston, according to National Weather Service temperature data. During the first half of the month, the state enjoyed warmer than average conditions, with temperatures running about 15 degrees above normal in many locations. No major arctic outbreaks occurred during the first 3 weeks of December. A strong cold front pushed across the state on the 20th, ushering in some arctic air. Nighttime lows on the 21st dropped below zero for the first time this season in many locations. Warmer air made its way back into the state for the last few days of the month before another arctic front moved through just in time for the New Year. Precipitation across the state was above average for the eastern third of the state, with Fargo and Grand Forks measuring surpluses of about 0.40 of an inch. Below average precipitation was recorded for many locations across the rest of the state. Minot saw a deficit of 0.50 of an inch, as did Bismarck and Dickinson with a deficit of 0.26 of an inch. Snowfall remained well below average for many locations during the first 3 weeks of the month. A strong low pressure system moved through the state on the 30th, bringing significant snow and ice across most areas.

Outlook, January: Just like December, the outlook for January 2005 calls for near to above average temperatures across the Northern Plains. The United States remains under the influence of a weak to moderate El Nino event. During an El Nino winter, the active jet stream is pushed towards the southern United States, bringing wet weather to the Gulf Coast states. The northern branch of the jet stream takes on a more east-west orientation, bringing mild air off the Pacific into the Northern Plains. This phenomenon looks to continue for the rest of the winter season, with slight strengthening expected according to the Climate Prediction Center. With a weak to moderate El Nino event taking place, North Dakota can expect to see above normal temperatures along with near normal precipitation for the month of January.

TEMPERATURE, December 1-31, 2004

District & Stations	Temperature			
	High	Low	Average	Depart/Norm ^{1/}
(Degrees F)				
NORTHWEST	44	-19	15	2
Bowbells	NA	NA	NA	NA
Williston	47	-23	18	4
Mohall	43	-16	11	-2
Minot	43	-18	15	3
NORTH CENTRAL	41	-19	10	2
Baker	41	-19	11	1
Bottineau	41	-20	10	2
Rugby	NA	NA	NA	NA
NORTHEAST	41	-17	10	-1
Cando	39	-17	11	-3
Cavalier	45	-22	7	-4
Forest River	43	-15	11	1
Grand Forks	39	-14	11	1
Langdon	40	-19	7	2
St. Thomas	43	-15	10	0
WEST CENTRAL	47	-20	17	2
Hazen	49	-18	17	3
Turtle Lake	45	-18	15	2
Watford City	47	-23	19	2
CENTRAL	43	-18	12	1
Carrington	42	-16	14	3
Harvey	44	-17	13	1
Jamestown	44	-15	16	3
Robinson	45	-16	16	5
Streeter	43	-19	16	3
EAST CENTRAL	43	-15	14	2
Dazey	44	-16	14	3
Fargo	44	-15	15	3
Hillsboro	41	-16	13	1
SOUTHWEST	48	-19	22	5
Beach	47	-20	22	6
Bowman	48	-18	22	4
Dickinson	46	-22	21	4
Hettinger	51	-18	22	4
SOUTH CENTRAL	49	-19	18	4
Mandan	49	-20	18	4
Linton	48	-18	18	3
SOUTHEAST	44	-13	17	4
Edgeley	43	-11	16	3
Oakes	45	-14	19	5
Wyndmere	45	-15	17	4

^{1/} Normal is the 1961-90 average. NA=Not Available. Weather data collected from NDAWN stations and compiled by UND Aerospace Regional Weather Information Center.